

## משניות על תשובה

### *Understanding T'shuva in the Mishna*

You have been attending VTT for many years and have spent many lessons in those years learning about how Yom Kippur is the day on which our mistakes are forgiven. So, you have decided that you are going to take advantage of the gift of Yom Kippur in a clever way. There is another student in the grade who drives you crazy. This person is constantly getting on your nerves in a variety of different ways and you have had it! It's time to get back at this person. You spread a nasty rumor through the students in the grade that eventually spreads to students in other grades. You see that when your nemesis comes out to the playground, everyone is watching, whispering, and pointing. You feel that you have accomplished your goal and, in a couple of weeks, you will pray for forgiveness on Yom Kippur and be cleansed of any wrongdoing or guilt.

### מסכת יומא (יום הכפורים)

#### פרק ח

One who says, I will sin and then I will “do” *t'shuva*, I will sin and then I will “do” *t'shuva*, it is not enough for him to “do” *t'shuva*. If one says: I will sin and Yom Kippur will atone, Yom Kippur will not atone. Sins that are between man and God, Yom Kippur atones.

ט האומר, אֶחָטָא וְאָשׁוּב, אֶחָטָא וְאָשׁוּב,  
אֵין מְסַפִּיקוֹן בְּיָדוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה. אֶחָטָא  
יוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים מְכַפֵּר, אֵין יוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים  
מְכַפֵּר.

1) When is going through the process of *t'shuva* not enough to achieve forgiveness?

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2) The mishna is creating an important distinction between “accidental” and “intentional” wrong-doing. What message is the mishna teaching about that here?

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3) Do you think there is a way to achieve forgiveness for sins that are done on purpose? The mishna seems not to mention one.

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### Introductory Question:

- 1) What are the two different types of sins according to Jewish tradition for which we are supposed to apologize and “do” *t’shuvah* before Yom Kippur?

Regarding sins that are between human and God, Yom Kippur atones. Sins that are between human and human, Yom Kippur does not atone until one asks forgiveness from his fellow. On this, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariyah interpreted (from the following *pasuk*): “from all your sins will you be clean before God,” sins that are between human and God, Yom Kippur atones. Sins that are between human and human, Yom Kippur does not atone until one asks forgiveness from his fellow.

עֲבֻרוֹת שֶׁבֵּין אָדָם לַמָּקוֹם, יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר. עֲבֻרוֹת שֶׁבֵּין אָדָם לְחֶבְרוֹ, אִין יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר, עַד שִׁירְצָה אֶת חֶבְרוֹ. אֶת זֶה דִּרֶשׁ רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה, (וּיקרא מו)  
”מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי ה’ תִּמְחָרוּ.” עֲבֻרוֹת שֶׁבֵּין אָדָם לַמָּקוֹם, יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר. עֲבֻרוֹת שֶׁבֵּין אָדָם לְחֶבְרוֹ, אִין יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר, עַד שִׁירְצָה אֶת חֶבְרוֹ.

- 2) What happens to a person’s *t’shuvah* if the person to whom they apologized refused to accept the apology?

- 3) What are some examples of sins against God?

Rabbi Akiva said: Happy are you, O Israel - before whom do you cleanse yourselves? Who cleanses you? Your Father in Heaven, as it is written: “And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean,” and it is also written, “God is the hope of Israel.” Just as the mikveh cleanses what is impure, so too does the Holy One, Blessed be God, cleanse Israel.

אָמַר רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא, אֲשֶׁרֵיכֶם יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי מִי אַתֶּם מְטַהְרִין? וּמִי מְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם? אֲבִיכֶם שְׁבַשְׁמִים, שְׁנֵאמַר, (יחזקאל לו) וְזָרַקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מַיִם טְהוֹרִים וְטַהַרְתֶּם. וְאָמַר, (ירמיה יז) ”מִקְוֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל ה’,” מִה מִקְוֵה מְטַהֵר אֶת הַטְּמְאִים, אֵף הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְטַהֵר אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל:

- 1) Does this part of the mishna explain why Yom Kippur is known as the “happy fast?” Explain your answer.

### Introductory Question:

2) What are your beliefs regarding the idea that God sees all and records our destinies in the “Book of Life” and “Book of Death” on Yom Kippur? (There is no right answer for this. Just think about it and write down your thoughts).

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### פרקי אבות, פרק ב'

Know what is above you: an eye that is watching and an ear that is listening. And all of your deeds are recorded in a book.

א...דעַ מַה לְמַעַלָּה מִמֶּךָ, עֵין רוֹאָה וְאֵז  
שׁוֹמֵעַת, וְכָל מַעֲשֶׂיךָ בִּסְפָר נִכְתָּבִין:

1) How literally do you think the reader is supposed to take this mishna? Is there an eye that is always watching us and an ear that is always listening? Are all of our deeds literally recorded in a book?

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2) What is the message (related to *t'shuva*) that this mishna is trying to get us to understand?

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3) What *t'shuva* commitments will you be making during this High Holy Day season? How do you anticipate being able to follow through on them?

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## הלכות יום הכפורים

### *Some Laws of Yom Kippur*

#### Introductory Question:

1) Even though Yom Kippur is the happy fast, on what kinds of things are we supposed to be concentrating on Yom Kippur? What is our attitude and state of mind supposed to be like?

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On Yom Kippur, it is forbidden to eat, drink, bathe, anoint one's self, wear leather sandals, and share in intimate relations. The King and the bride may wash their faces, and a woman after childbirth may wear leather sandals, according to Rabbi Eliezer, but the Sages forbid it.

פרק ח'  
א יום הכפורים אסור באכילה ובשתיה  
וברחיצה ובסיכה ובנעילת הסנדל  
ובתשמיש המטה. והמלך והכלה ירחצו  
את פניהם. והחיה תנעול את הסנדל,  
דברי רבי אליעזר. וחכמים אוסרין:

2) There are six activities that are forbidden on Yom Kippur. What common characteristics do they seem to share? What are they trying to achieve as a group?

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Young children, we do not ask them to fast on Yom Kippur. However, we train them one or two years beforehand so that they become accustomed to the commandments.

ד התינוקות, אין מעניין אותן ביום  
הכפורים, אבל מחנכינו אותם לפני  
שנה ולפני שנתים, בשביל שיהיו רגילי  
במצות:

1) The mishna uses the term “beforehand” when referring to the age when children should begin to fast. What event is the mishna talking about here?

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2) With this event in mind, at what age should a girl begin to fast? \_\_\_\_\_

at what age should a boy begin to fast? \_\_\_\_\_